

A 2012-102

RE: closure of the Parlin Colorado Post Office

RECEIVED December 23, 2011

To: Ruth Goldway
Chairwoman
Postal Regulatory Commission

2012 JAN 20 P 2: 05

POSTAL REGULATORY
COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Dear Madam,

This is a request to appeal the final determination to close the Parlin Colorado Post Office.

The postal service has embarked on some indiscriminant new policies, in order to up their anti in negotiations with congress. These include a hiring freeze and the wholesale closure of rural post offices. Public outcry is a powerful tool and has caused a congressional response. A six month moratorium on closures has been proposed by Colorado congressmen Bennett and Udall (see enclosure).

As the budget for all the rural Post Offices in the United States only accounts for .07% of the USPS's budget; it is apparent there is something else behind all this. What the USPS really wants is to stop funding retirement and health care 75 years into the future and we are paying the price.

Although we just received this final determination, after following the lengthy closure procedure, I believe the decision to close was made in June 2009. At that time the Parlin Postmaster was called into OIC at a nearby Post Office with a higher designation. After a very short time (compared to normal USPS procedure) he became Postmaster there. I now believe this was a very purposeful way to eliminate the position in Parlin. The job has never been posted due to the "hiring freeze". This is how Parlin got on the first list for closure. The two other Post Offices in the area, though less popular, centrally located, with out routes, and with much quieter community meetings, attendance, or outcry, were taken off the closure lists in short order, they have permanent Postmasters. I find this very unfair. The OIC in Parlin should be made Postmaster and the office should stay open. The salary for a clerk is more than for a P.M., the Gunnison office obviously doesn't need her (overstaffed) and after two and a half years she deserves the job.

The paperwork contained in the closure package is skewed toward closure. It starts out talking about a Post Office in Wyoming, and takes it from there. The numbers are incorrect, the questions and concerns voiced at the community meeting are limited compared to what actually took place or even out right untrue.

Parlin serves 119 customers not the 61 in your paperwork, 55 people attended the meeting not the 39 in your paperwork. I know more than 25 questionnaires were returned and even your paperwork actually added up to 41. Please read comments in final determination package and news paper article enclosed. There are 20 boxes in Parlin, 10 deliveries for the Highway 50, County Road 44 & 43 routes, 22 for County Road 76, and 67 for the Ohio City NBU - Pitkin's mail is also delivered by the route. The revenue for this year is up. Saying the OIC works 8 minutes a day is absurd.

Before our community meeting even started the postal representatives asked to make it short as they had a long drive home. Marcella went over the closure procedure. The reps delivered their message (and answered most concerns the same way): service will not be affected; use the internet, the route driver will take care of it. Then our

comments for close to an hour and a half when we finally realized we weren't being heard. We all came away seeing that the reps were only there to deliver their message and could care less about what we said. I personally asked, "Are you writing this down?" the rep held up a legal pad with about four sentences scrawled across it. The determination package comment and response reflects this lack of attention. Most of us in attendance chose to write our congressmen instead of relying on these USPS reps. (see enclosed sample letters)

The main concerns were:

Why must we drive 40 miles to a Post Office? The traffic flow prohibits the use of Pitkin P.O. The ice and snow in winter especially limits using the up valley P.O. – many customers are elderly and simply refuse to go up the winding road with significantly higher elevation.

Why our Post Office and not Sargents or Pitkin?

At the time they weren't even being considered for closure and since have been removed from the list. Out of the three Parlin is the most centrally located, serves the biggest area, has 2 routes, and is the oldest and most established historical transport place in the area.

Don't they know we've already lost one Post Office?

Ohio City contract Post Office closed in 2001.

We have established business' that need to use the P.O. immediately not after waiting for the driver or driving 40 miles.

What if I'm not home, what if a package doesn't fit in a locker?

If the total cost of all Post Offices in America cost the USPS .07% of its budget why are you doing it?

I thought the Postal Service was based on service not profit?

Why don't we have a permanent Postmaster? Many thought the OIC was permanent; she'd been there so long.

Why not just stop Saturday delivery?

Why not shorten the hours?

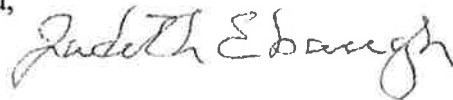
Why not put stamps at \$.50, packages at \$5 instead of \$4.95?

Most questions and concerns went unanswered, they were just the messengers. So we wrote to congressmen Bennett and Udall, who seem to agree that this closure should be appealed.

Please reconsider this closure; the Parlin P.O. really is the heart of our rural community.

Please reconsider this policy and keep in mind the real purpose of the mail service.

Thank you,



Judith Ebaugh
P O Box 95
Pitkin, CO 81241

Update on proposed closures of rural Post Offices and processing facilities

From : John Whitney (Bennet) <John_Whitney@bennet.senate.gov>

Fri, Dec 09, 2011 05:30 PM

Subject : Update on proposed closures of rural Post Offices and processing facilities

To : John Whitney (Bennet) <John_Whitney@bennet.senate.gov>

Dear Southwest Colorado Leader:

Below is an important update on Senator Bennet's work on rural post offices and postal processing facilities. Have a great weekend and please feel free to contact me with any questions on this matter.

John Whitney
Southwest Regional Director
Senator Michael Bennet
970-259-1710 work
835 E 2nd Ave Suite 206
Durango, CO 81301
<http://bennet.senate.gov/>

UNITED STATES SENATE

Bennet, Udall Push for Six-Month Moratorium on Rural Post Office Closings or Consolidations in Colorado and Across the Country

Moratorium Would Allow Congress to Address Problem Through Comprehensive Postal Service Reform

Latest in Series of Efforts to Prevent Rural and Mountain Post Office Closings Across Colorado

Denver, CO – Colorado U.S. Senators Michael Bennet and Mark Udall today pushed for a six-month moratorium on the closing or consolidation of area mail processing facilities and rural post offices to give Congress time to address the United State Postal Service's (USPS) financial problems through comprehensive reform.

In a letter to Majority Leader Harry Reid, Minority Leader Mitch McConnell and Senate Appropriations Committee Chairman Daniel Inouye and Ranking Member Thad Cochran, Bennet and Udall, along with 18 other Senators, called for the next appropriation bill to mandate this moratorium.

"While we may have very different views on how to financially improve the postal service, we all believe that democratically elected members of the Senate and the House have the responsibility to make significant changes to the postal service," **the Senators wrote in the letter.** "...We believe that it is very important to give Congress the opportunity to reform the postal service in a way that protects universal service while ensuring its financial viability for decades to come."

Last month, Bennet and Udall wrote a letter to Senate committee leaders urging them to consider western states and rural communities when exploring potential reforms to the U.S. Postal Service. In the letter, the Senators outlined priorities for reform that encourage innovation, take creative approaches to existing assets and maintain the competitive edge.

In June, Bennet and Udall sent a letter to the U.S. Postmaster General expressing concern over USPS location closures and consolidations that could make it more difficult for Coloradans to send letters and mail packages.

In September, they sent a letter to Ruth Goldway, chairwoman of the Postal Regulatory Commission, urging the Postal Regulatory Commission to carefully consider the effects of possible postal service closures on rural areas and small towns in Colorado and across the country.

Full text of the letter is included below.

Dear Majority Leader Reid, Minority Leader McConnell, Chairman Inouye, and Ranking Member Cochran:

Everyone understands that the United States Postal Service (USPS) is experiencing significant financial problems today and that changes need to be made as the USPS adjusts to a digital world.

To address this serious problem, Congress is in the midst of significantly reforming the postal service. Several bills have been introduced in the Senate and the House on this issue. On November 9th, the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee passed the 21st Century Postal Service Act, S.1789, by a vote of 9-1. The House is also moving forward with postal reform legislation.

While we may have very different views on how to financially improve the postal service, we all believe that democratically elected members of the Senate and the House have the responsibility to make significant changes to the postal service.

Unfortunately, we are concerned that the postal service may preempt Congress on this matter by closing or consolidating nearly 3,700 mostly rural post offices, over 250 mail processing facilities, and eliminating overnight delivery for first class mail before postal reform legislation is enacted. While some of these changes may be needed, we believe that it is very important to give Congress the opportunity to reform the postal service in a way that protects universal service while ensuring its financial viability for decades to come.

Therefore, we respectfully ask that you include language in the next appropriations bill to prevent the USPS from closing or consolidating area mail processing facilities or rural post offices for the next six months. This six month moratorium will give Congress the time needed to enact reforms necessary for the postal service to succeed in the 21st century.

We look forward to working with you on this important issue. Thank you for your consideration.

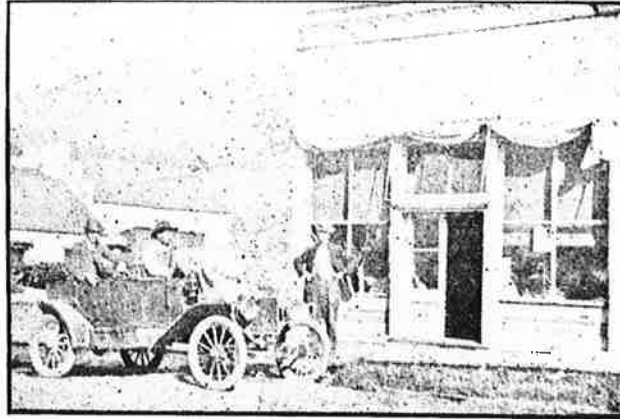
#

The Pitkin-Parlin Mail (and Passenger) Stage

Meets D. & R. G. Westbound Train at Parlin Every Day.

Stage Leaves
Pitkin
at 7 a.m. each day
Arrives at
Parlin
by 10 a.m.

Returning Leaves
Parlin
After Arrival
of Train
Due 10:16 a.m.



RATES

From Pitkin to
Ohio City
or vice versa
\$0.75

From Ohio City
to Parlin
or vice versa
\$1.00

Reasonable Rates
on Freight

Pitkin-Parlin
Every Day

THE FAST MAIL
S. R. NESBIT, Prop., Pitkin, Colorado
A delightful drive over a most beautiful and scenic mountain road

Parlin-Pitkin
Every Day



CLERK IN CHARGE
COMMUNITY POST OFFICE
OHIO CITY CO 81237

Marcel "Jim" Ray

Last Day Postmark

1830

2001

Parlin PO eyed for closure

'Study' to determine whether site should be shuttered

Will Shoemaker
Times Staff Writer

Amidst a shaky financial climate for the United States Postal Service (USPS), one local post office is being eyed for closure.

Less mail volume and a hiring freeze in recent years has resulted in a "discontinuance study" for Parlin's historic office 12 miles east of Gunnison.

A meeting that involved USPS officials from Denver was held in Ohio City last Wednesday, attended by more than 55 community members. The post office is housed in the same building as the office for the QT Cabins and General Store, at the intersection of Hwy. 50 and County Road 76.

"It's been a transfer point for 131 years and it still is," said Ohio City resident Ruth Dolezal.

But closure is not a done deal



Former Parlin Postmaster Chuck Glaze peruses a newspaper in the entryway of the post office east of Gunnison, which is being studied for possible closure due in part to a decline in mail volume.

Photo by Will Shoemaker

just yet. A lengthy process for considering changes, followed by possible appeal, has commenced.

Marcela Rivera, consumer

affairs manager with the USPS in Denver, said that a questionnaire

Parlin A12

Article on meeting
4/13/10

Parlin

► from page A1

has been sent out to impacted members of the community.

"I have to say that there's been a very high volume of responses," she said.

After local feedback has been gathered, a proposal for changes will be submitted to postal headquarters in Washington, D.C., where a final determination will be made.

"It may be no change at all, a change in hours, decreased days of service, or that the post office is discontinued," Rivera said.

After the final determination, customers have 30 days to appeal to the Postal Regulatory Commission. That group has 120 days to consider appeals and potentially reverse a decision.

"I think there's a lot of things that point to the fact that this is something they really need to do," Leon Oltmann, who lives between Parlin and Ohio City, said of a closure.

Citizens are reaching out to legislators to try to convince them otherwise.

Rivera said that two factors led to the management-initiated decision to study the closure of Parlin's post office.

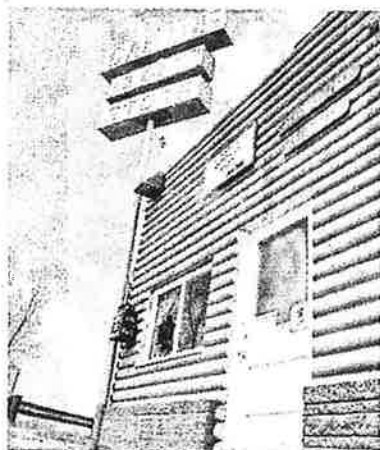
For one, it does not have a career postmaster. Sherri Cleveland is currently the officer in charge.

But USPS has implemented a hiring freeze for permanent career employees in recent years, Rivera said, and for that reason Parlin has been without a postmaster.

Also, the office has shown a decrease in work volume — or mail volume — though Rivera couldn't speak to specifics.

She noted that, throughout the organization, over the last three years a 20 percent decrease in volume has been seen nationwide. Last year, USPS experienced an \$8.5 billion deficit and is looking at a projected \$6 billion deficit this year, said Rivera.

"We're seeing that a lot of our customers are already going to



The Parlin post office

alternate methods of mailing," she said of Parlin. "It seems like you have a lot of business owners or people who are there part-time."

Rivera said that eight offices of 600 in the district are currently being studied for discontinuance.

"This post office's discontinuance study is not the only measure this agency is taking to remain viable," she said. "Because of the economic downturn, the number of offices being studied has escalated."

Rivera noted that there's a proposal before Congress to cease Saturday deliveries nationwide.

Still, Quartz Creek Valley residents are putting up a fight to see that another of their post offices isn't shuttered. Ohio City's post office was discontinued in 2001.

Dolezal and her husband Larry have spent more than \$8,000 at the Parlin post office in the last six years just on packages they send to military troops overseas.

"We've got businesses up here that depend on the post office to mail their packages," she said.

Former Pitkin Postmaster (1985-2006) Chuck Glaze was hanging around the post office Tuesday, reading a newspaper and reminiscing about the historical significance of the establishment.

"It would take us off the map, basically," he said. "It's a shame, the whole thing."

(Will Shoemaker can be contacted at 970.641.1414 or will@gunnisontimes.com)

Date of Posting: 12/09/2011

Date of Removal: 01/10/2012

FINAL DETERMINATION TO CLOSE
THE PARLIN, CO POST OFFICE
AND EXTEND
SERVICE BY HIGHWAY CONTRACT ROUTE SERVICE

I. RESPONSIVENESS TO COMMUNITY POSTAL NEEDS

The Postal Service is issuing the final determination to close the Parlin, CO Post Office and provide delivery and retail services by highway contract route service under the administrative responsibility of the Gunnison Post Office, located 12 miles away. Service will be provided to cluster box units (CBUs).

CBUs are secure free-standing units of individually locked mail compartments installed and maintained by the Postal Service at no cost to the customer. A parcel locker may also be installed.

The postmaster position became vacant when the postmaster was promoted on April 24, 2010. Since the postmaster vacancy an OIC has been installed to operate the office. Postmaster level and office service hours are determined by a workload analysis which includes the number of deliveries and revenue. *- deliveries in this report are 11 incorrect revenue for 2011 is up..*

The office was studied for possible closing or consolidation due to the following reasons: 1. Declining workload 2. Proximity to other offices 3. Alternate services could be provided by other means

The Parlin Post Office, an EAS-11 level, provides service from 07:00 to 15:00 Monday - Friday, 08:00 to 12:00 Saturday and lobby hours of 24 on Monday - Friday and 24 on Saturday to 20 post office box or general delivery customers and 41 delivery customers. Retail services included the sale of stamps, stamped paper, and money orders; special services such as Registered Mail, Certified Mail, Insured Mail, COD Mail, and Express Mail services; and the acceptance and dispatch of all classes of mail. *incorrect 115 customers*

The retail window averaged six transaction(s) accounting for eight minute(s) of retail workload daily. With minimal workload, the Postal Service feels that effective and regular service will be provided by highway contract route service. Office receipts for the last 3 years were: \$10,953 (29 revenue units) in FY 2008; \$12,824 (33 revenue units) in FY 2009; and \$11,393 (30 revenue units) in FY 2010. There were no permit mailer(s) or postage meter customer(s). *20 boxes - 10 boxes highway route - 22 CR route and 63 Ohio City MBU ridiculous*
1st accurate one customer can take more time than that - serving mail

On April 13, 2011, representatives from the Postal Service were available at Ohio City School/Museum to answer questions and provide information to customers. 39 customer(s) attended the meeting. *incorrect 55-60 people crowded in.*

On March 28, 2011, 60 questionnaires were distributed to delivery customers of the Parlin Post Office. Questionnaires were also available over the counter for retail customers at the Parlin Post Office. 25 questionnaires were returned. Responses regarding the proposed alternate service were as follows: 0 favorable, 24 unfavorable, and 17 expressed no opinion. *24 + 17 = 41 responses*

A petition supporting the retention of the Parlin Post Office was received on April 22, 2011, with 41 signatures. *I didn't even see petition!!*

When this final determination is implemented, delivery and retail services will be provided by the Gunnison Post Office, an EAS-20 level office. Window service hours at the Gunnison Post Office are from 07:30 to 17:15, Monday through Friday, and 09:00 to 12:00 on Saturday. There are 510 post office boxes available.

The proposal to close the Parlin Post Office was posted with an invitation for comment at the Parlin Post Office and Gunnison Post Office from May 09, 2011 to July 10, 2011. The following additional concerns were received during the proposal posting period:

1. **Concern:** Customer expressed a concern about nonpostal services

Response:

The customer expressed a concern about nonpostal services. Nonpostal services provided at the Bairoil Post Office will be available at the Rawlins Post Office. Government forms normally provided by the post office will also be available at the administrative Post Office or by contacting your local government agency. *NOT EXH 1890. In 1 Wyoming.*

2. **Concern:** Customers expressed concern for loss of community identity

Response:

The customer expressed a concern about the loss of the Communities' identity. A community's identity derives from the interest and vitality of its residents and their use of its name. The Postal Service is helping to preserve community identity by continuing the use of the Post Office name and ZIP Code in addresses and in the National Five-Digit ZIP Code and Post Office Directory.

3. **Concern:** Customers expressed concern over the dependability of Rural Route/HCR service. *The community meets daily at its post office. The only open door year round in an area covering 1002 sq square miles*

Response:

The customer expressed a concern over the dependability of rural route/HCR service. Rural/HCR carriers perform a vital function in the United States Postal Service serving thousands of families and businesses in rural and suburban areas while traveling millions of miles daily. Rural/HCR carriers are highly respected by the American public. This respect has been earned by many years of dedication to the Postal Service and to postal customers. During national and local emergencies, including prolonged periods of extreme weather conditions, rural/hcr carriers have demonstrated great responsibility in providing mail service to postal customers. Rural/HCR carriers are required to serve the route

No one at the meeting expressed concern over carrier dependability. They are concerned about the loss of quality in house services.

expeditiously and arrive at boxes at about the same time each day.

4. Concern:

Customers felt the loss of a post office would have a detrimental effect on the business community

Response:

The customer expressed a concern about the detrimental effect the loss of the post office would have on the community. Businesses generally require regular and effective postal services, and these will always be provided to the suspended Post Office community. There is no indication that the business community will be adversely affected. Questionnaire responses revealed that customers will continue to use local businesses if the post office is discontinued.

5. Concern:

Customers said they would miss the special attention and assistance provided by the personnel at the Parlin Post Office.

Response:

IT IS A REFLECTION OF THE LACK OF CONCERN FOR RURAL CUSTOMERS BY THE U.S.P.S.
This study is not in any way a reflection of the staffing at the Parlin Post Office. Courteous and friendly service is provided by USPS employees.

6. Concern:

Customers were concerned about obtaining accountable mail and large parcels

Response:

Many customers live a lot further than a 1/2 mi. Parcel lockers are very small - They would have to drive up to 50 miles round trip
The customer expressed a concern about obtaining accountable mail and large parcels. If you live less than one-half mile from the line of travel, the carrier will attempt delivery of accountable items and large parcels to the customer's residence. If the live over one-half mile away or is not home when delivery is attempted, a notice will be left in the mailbox. Large parcels will be left outside the mailbox or at a designated location or a notice will be left in the mailbox. Attempted delivery items will be taken back to the administrative Post Office. Customers may pick up the item at the post office, request redelivery on another day or authorize delivery to another party.

7. Concern:

Customers were concerned about senior citizens.

Response:

The majority of customers are older & retired in this city.
The customer expressed a concern about senior citizens. Carrier service is beneficial to many senior citizens and those who face special challenges because the carrier can provide delivery and retail services to . Customers do not have to make a special trip to the post office for service. Special provisions are made for hardship cases or special customer needs. To request an exception for hardship delivery, customers may contact the administrative postmaster for more information.

8. Concern:

No Concern.?

Response:

We appreciate you taking the time to complete the Customer Questionnaire. Your responses will be considered when recommendations for changes in service are determined.

9. Concern:

You expressed a concern about the loss of a public bulletin board.

Response:

There is no other local establishment (a western store) open 5 months a year
The Postal Service is not required to maintain a public bulletin board. A public bulletin board can be made available at another local establishment.

10. Concern:

You were concerned about having to travel to another post office for service

Response:

Selling stamps is not the same as weighing packages buying appropriate postage and box - international custom forms
The customer expressed a concern about having to travel to another post office for service. Services provided at the post office will be available from the carrier, and customers will not have to travel to another post office for service. Most transactions do not require meeting the carrier at the mailbox. Stamps by Mail and Money Order Application forms are available for customer convenience.

11. Concern:

STC - lots of transactions are too complicated to do from a car!
Customer expressed a concern about the length of time it took to forward your mail

Response:

The customer expressed a concern about the length of time it took to forward your mail. You may pick up address change notice post cards at the post office that can be mailed to your correspondents listing your correct new mailing address. As your correspondents use your correct mailing address there will no longer be a requirement that your mail goes through our forwarding system.

12. Concern: The vacancy of a postmaster - happened during a
Response: hiring freeze!!!
Our P.M. was asked to
A.C. in Almont - we're
had a clerk for 2 1/2
years because
of U.S.P.S. new
policies.

Customers asked why their post office was being discontinued while others were retained

The customer asked why the suspended post office was being discontinued while others were retained. Post offices are reviewed on a case-by-case basis. When there is a vacancy in a small office, it is customary to conduct a study of the business activity and investigate the feasibility of providing service by alternate means.

13. Concern: Customers expressed concern about collection of outgoing mail - untrue!

Response: The customer expressed a concern about the collection of outgoing mail. Collection of mail will be made by the carrier when serving the route. The customer should raise the flag on the mailbox to alert the carrier that outgoing mail is to be collected from the mailbox. Outgoing mail would also be collected daily by the carrier from a CBU unit.

14. Concern: Customers expressed concern that postal employees at the administrative office Post Office are not friendly. untrue!

Response: The customer expressed a concern that postal employees at the administrative Post Office are not friendly. Employee courtesy is always a concern of postal managers. Postal employees receive periodic instructions regarding employee courtesy. We do not condone our employees' execution of their duties in an unprofessional or discourteous manner. This concern will be conveyed to the postmaster by the manager, post office operations.

15. Concern: Customers questioned the economic savings of the proposed discontinuance

Response: All rural post offices nationwide cost .07% of USPS's budget. The clerk handling parish is already a full time employee who won't be fired if parish closes. What you save

The customer questioned the economic savings of the proposed discontinuance. Carrier service is more cost-effective than maintaining a postal facility and postmaster position. The Postal Service estimates a positive annual savings.

16. Concern: Customers were concerned about growth in the community

Response: The customer expressed a concern about growth in the community. The growth of a community does not depend on the location of a post office. Based on information obtained by the Postal Service, it was determined that there has been minimal growth in the area in recent years. Carrier service will be able to accommodate future growth.

17. Concern: Customers were concerned about having to make an address change on their bank checks and stationery

Response: The customer expressed a concern about an address change. Customers that erect a rural mailbox along the carrier's line of travel will be assigned a 911 address. Customers can continue to use the community name, suspended Post Office, in the last line of the address, however, in order to insure regular and effective service the Zip Code may be changed. Mail will be forwarded for one year.

18. Concern: Customers were concerned about mail security

Response: The customer expressed a concern about the security of mail. CBU units are secure and weather resilient. Customers may place a lock on their mailboxes. The mailbox must have a slot large enough to accommodate the customer's normal daily mail volume. The Postal Service does not open mailboxes which are locked and does not accept keys for this purpose.

19. Concern: Customers were concerned about obtaining services from the carrier, packages mailed overseas, and BLM mailings.

Attendees asked why Saturday deliveries couldn't be stopped or hours lowered to alleviate need for closure.
They asked why the PO was spending so much for advertising sponsoring evening news, nightline etc instead of getting it to mail delivery

Response:

*repeated
560 on
R 22 4500
R 22 4500*

The customer were concerned about obtaining services from the carrier, retail services provided at the post office are available from the carrier. Most transactions do not require meeting the carrier at the mailbox. Stamps by Mail and Money Order Application forms are available for customer convenience. Listed below are some services available from the carrier and how to obtain them.

PURCHASING STAMPS BY MAIL

The Stamps by Mail Program provides customers the opportunity to purchase stamps, envelopes, and postal cards by using Form 3227-R, Stamp Purchase Order (Rural), available from the post office or the carrier. Commemorative stamps and stamp collecting products are also available. The customer addresses the postage paid order form envelope, encloses payment by personal check or postal money order made payable to the US Postal Service, and mails the form (postage-free) or leaves it in the mailbox for the carrier to pick up. Most orders are processed overnight, and some immediately.

PURCHASING POSTAL MONEY ORDERS

Customers may purchase money orders by meeting the carrier at the mailbox, completing an application, and paying the carrier (in cash) the price of the money order, plus the fee. The carrier gives the customer a receipt for the application. The money order is completed when the carrier returns to the post office, and a money order receipt is left in the customer's mailbox on the next delivery day. Most customers provide the carrier with a stamped, self-addressed envelope in which the completed money order is mailed to its destination. If customers prefer, the completed money orders will be returned for verification on the next delivery day.

SPECIAL SERVICES

Special services such as certified, registered, Express Mail, delivery confirmation, signature confirmation, and COD may be obtained from the carrier by leaving a note in the mailbox, along with the appropriate payment. The carrier will provide the services that day and leave a customer receipt in the mailbox on the next delivery day.

HOLDING MAIL

Customers who will be away for an extended time, such as a vacation, may request that their mail be held at the post office during their absence. Upon return the customer asks the post office to resume delivery.

20. **Concern:**

Customers were concerned about the postal service overpaying for advertising.

Response:

Customers were concerned about the postal service overpaying for advertising. Advertising is a cost of doing business necessary to be informative of new products and services.

21. **Concern:**

Customers were concerned on who makes the final discontinuance decision.

Response:

Customers were concerned on who makes the final discontinuance decision. That decision is made by the PRC/Headquarters.

Some advantages of the proposal are:

1. The rural and contract carriers may provide retail services, alleviating the need to go to the post office. Stamps by Mail order forms are provided for customer convenience.
2. Customers opting for carrier service will have 24-hour access to their mail. *?The lobby is open 24 hrs a day*
3. Savings for the Postal Service contribute in the long run to stable postage rates and savings for customers. *carriers comes once a day*
4. CBUs can offer the security of individually locked mail compartments. Parcel lockers provide convenient parcel delivery for customers.
5. Customers opting for carrier service will not have to pay post office box fees.
6. Saves time and energy for customers who drive to the post office to pick up mail. *ha!*

Some disadvantages of the proposal are:

1. The loss of a retail outlet. Retail services may be provided by the rural or contract delivery carrier.
2. Meeting the rural or contract delivery carrier at the box to transact business. However, it is not necessary to be present to conduct most Postal Service transactions.
3. A change in the mailing address. The community name will continue to be used in the new address. A carrier route address will be assigned.

4. A change in your PO Box Fees may be a result of this proposal.

Taking all available information into consideration, the Postal Service concludes this final determination will provide a maximum degree of effective and regular postal services to the community.

II. EFFECT ON COMMUNITY

Parlin is an unincorporated community located in GUNNISON County. The community is administered politically by Gunnison, Co.. Police protection is provided by the Gunnison, Co.. Fire protection is provided by the Gunnison, Co.. The community is comprised of Ranchers and those who commute to work at nearby communities and may work in local businesses.

Businesses and organizations include: Wood Products Signs, Gunnison Valley Disposal, QT Stoe & Cabins, The Junk Guy, Pauls Plants II, Alpine Mechanical, Lynx Trax . Residents may travel to nearby communities for other supplies and services.

Nonpostal services provided at the Parlin Post Office will be available at the Gunnison Post Office. Government forms normally provided by the Post Office will also be available at the Gunnison Post Office or by contacting your local government agency.

The following nonpostal concerns were expressed from questionnaires, the community meeting, on the petition, and on the congressional inquiry:

1. **Concern:** Customer expressed a concern about nonpostal services

Response:

The customer expressed a concern about nonpostal services. Nonpostal services provided at the Bairoil Post Office will be available at the Rawlins Post Office. Government forms normally provided by the post office will also be available at the administrative Post Office or by contacting your local government agency.

2. **Concern:**

Response:

Customer expressed a concern about the loss of the community bulletin board at the PostOffice.

A public bulletin board can be made available at another local establishment

3. **Concern:**

Response:

Customers expressed concern over the dependability of Rural Route/HCR service.

The customer expressed a concern over the dependability of rural route/HCR service. Rural/HCR carriers perform a vital function in the United States Postal Service serving thousands of families and businesses in rural and suburban areas while traveling millions of miles daily. Rural/HCR carriers are highly respected by the American public. This respect has been earned by many years of dedication to the Postal Service and to postal customers. During national and local emergencies, including prolonged periods of extreme weather conditions, rural/hcr carriers have demonstrated great responsibility in providing mail service to postal customers. Rural/HCR carriers are required to serve the route expeditiously and arrive at boxes at about the same time each day.

4. **Concern:**

Response:

Customers felt the loss of a post office would have a detrimental effect on the business community

The customer expressed a concern about the detrimental effect the loss of the post office would have on the community. Businesses generally require regular and effective postal services, and these will always be provided to the suspended Post Office community. There is no indication that the business community will be adversely affected. Questionnaire responses revealed that customers will continue to use local businesses if the post office is discontinued.

5. **Concern:**

Customers were concerned about senior citizens.

*you obviously have no idea what these
post offices mean to rural people.
IT is the heart of the community
a meeting place, an information center,
often the only conversation of the day!!!*

Response:

The customer expressed a concern about senior citizens. Carrier service is beneficial to many senior citizens and those who face special challenges because the carrier can provide delivery and retail services to . Customers do not have to make a special trip to the post office for service. Special provisions are made for hardship cases or special customer needs. To request an exception for hardship delivery, customers may contact the administrative postmaster for more information.

6. Concern:

You expressed a concern about the loss of a public bulletin board.

Response:

The Postal Service is not required to maintain a public bulletin board. A public bulletin board can be made available at another local establishment.

Based on the information obtained in the course of this discontinuance study, the Postal Service concludes this final determination will not adversely affect the community.

III. EFFECT ON EMPLOYEES

The postmaster position became vacant when the postmaster was promoted on April 24, 2010. The noncareer postmaster relief (PMR) may be separated from the Postal Service. No other Postal Service employee will be adversely affected. Since the postmaster vacancy an OIC has been installed to operate the office.

IV. ECONOMIC SAVINGS

The Postal Service estimates an annual savings of \$ 49,279 with a breakdown as follows:

Postmaster Salary (EAS-11, No COLA)	\$ 33,168
Fringe Benefits @ 33.5%	\$ 11,111
Annual Lease Costs	<u>+ \$ 5,000</u>
Total Annual Costs	\$ 49,279
Less Annual Cost of Replacement Service	<u>- \$ 0</u>
Total Annual Savings	<u>\$ 49,279</u>

A one-time expense of \$ 2000 will be incurred for the movement of this facility.

V. OTHER FACTORS

COST of expanded carrier services

The Postal Service has also commenced solicitation of eligible businesses in Parlin for a possible Village Post Office establishment.

VI. SUMMARY

This is the final determination to close the Parlin, CO Post Office and provide delivery and retail services by highway contract route service under the administrative responsibility of the Gunnison Post Office, located 12 miles away. Service will be provided to cluster box units (CBUs).

The postmaster was promoted on April 24, 2010. If the office has a noncareer PMR(s), they may be separated from the Postal Service; however, attempts will be made to reassign the employee(s) to a nearby facility. No other employee(s) will be adversely affected. The workload has declined. Effective and regular service will continue to be provided by highway contract route service.

The Parlin Post Office provided delivery and retail service to 20 PO Box or general delivery customers and 41 delivery route customers. The daily retail window transactions averaged six. There are no permit mailers or postage meter customers.

There will no longer be a retail outlet in the community. However, delivery and retail services may be available from a rural or contract delivery carrier, which could alleviate the need to travel to a Post Office for service. The Postal Service will save an estimated \$49,279 annually. A disadvantage to some will be in meeting the rural or contract delivery carrier to transact business. However, it is not necessary to be present to conduct most Postal Service transactions with rural or contract delivery carrier.

Taking all available information into consideration, the Postal Service has determined that the advantages outweigh the disadvantages and this final determination is warranted.

VII. NOTICES

- A. Support Materials. Copies of all materials upon which this final determination is based are available for public inspection at the Parlin Post Office and Gunnison Post Office during normal office hours.
- B. Appeal Rights. This final determination to close the Parlin Post Office may be appealed by any person served by that office to the Postal Regulatory Commission at 901 New York Ave NW, Suite 200, Washington DC 20268-0001. Appeals must be received by the Commission within 30 days of the date this final determination is posted. If an appeal is filed, copies of appeal documents prepared by the Postal Regulatory Commission or the parties to the appeal will be made available for public inspection at Parlin Post Office and Gunnison Post Office during normal office hours.



Dean J Granholm
Vice President of Delivery and Post Office Operations

12/01/2011

Date

Leon K. Oltmann

P.O. Box 45
Parlin, Colorado 81239
Ph: 970-641-8055 E-mail: lko13jjo@sisna.com

April 20, 2011

Marcela Juarez-Rivera
District Consumer Affairs Manager
7500 E. 53rd Place, Room 2214
Denver, CO 80266-9631

Marcela:

Thank you Marcela, Lana Cozad and Sean Schtakleff for your presence and the information you provided to our community regarding the status of the Parlin Post Office on 4/13/2011. The following is feedback from the Parlin Postal Community (*I serve as President of the Quartz Creek Valley community organization*) and myself personally.

The turn out for this meeting, standing room only (55 +), demonstrated the interest and concern for the potential of closing the Parlin Post Office. Had the meeting been held after May 15th through the October there would have been in excess of 200 community members present (*fulltime summer residents*). Further points for consideration:

1. I have concern regarding timely notice for public input. The public meeting was verified only six days prior to the meeting, and, was the result of the acting Parlin Post Master calling the Denver office for verification, rather than the Denver office calling Parlin. When the Denver office called myself to schedule the meeting, the representative indicated that further communication and verification would take place with and through the Parlin Post Master. This "lack of timely communication" led to last minute planning for all with many community members unable to change existing schedules. A secondary issue is that the majorities of community members reside outside of the area during the winter months and will become aware of this action only after a decision has been made.
2. Location and continuance of current Postal site. The current location seems the most ideal location for serving all of the area east of Gunnison to Monarch Pass (currently Post Offices also exist in Pitkin (*22 miles north of Parlin*) and at Sargent (*at the foot of Monarch Pass 20 miles east of Parlin*). Parlin is the most centrally located Post Office at the corner of Hwy 50 (*the major highway through the Gunnison Valley*) and Hwy 76, which serves all of the northeast portion of Gunnison County including the communities of Ohio City and Pitkin (*the two major population centers of eastern Gunnison County*). The Parlin facility is a leased facility with an on-going lease availability. The Post Master is in an "acting" status due to the Post Office having frozen hiring prior to the retirement of the former Post Master. There are qualified and available candidates for a fulltime Post Master position.
3. Convenience. A number of "home" businesses exist and continue to develop in the Parlin Post Office area. Closure of the Parlin Post Office would result in:
 - a. Cost of changing existing advertisement and contact information for both that of postal service and in regional and national publications (*time, hassle and expense as well as clientele contact difficulties*).
 - b. Large monthly/quarterly mailings and on-going production will result in 35 to 50 mile round trips to the Gunnison Post Office vs. the existing 1 to 20 mile trip to

- Parlin, or create necessity of enlisting alternative mail and package delivery/receiving services (*a loss of revenue to the Postal system*).
- c. Due to the remote nature of this area geographically and due to mountain terrain, the Parlin Post Office is the most reliable connection with the outside world, enlarging further the impact of point b. above. Cell phone and rapid internet connections are unavailable in much of the area served.
 - d. The existing Post Office in Pitkin (*22 miles north on Hwy 76*) serves out-going mail only until 11:00 AM with the mail then picked up and taken to the Parlin Post Office; afternoon postal needs from that locale and business clients are serviced by Parlin (*closure would result in a minimum of a 60+ mile round trip to Gunnison from the Pitkin area for such postal services*).
4. Cost of Service. Cost of mileage plus added personnel time, as well as the potential of another part-time rural route carrier (*size of the geographic area served plus the added time required; current rural carrier has a 100 + mile route*) creates question as to financial savings gained through closure of the Parlin Post Office. Closure at best would result in minimal economic gain while negatively impacting convenience and service to this large and remote area.
5. Community gathering place. As in many rural communities, the Parlin Post Office is “the” community gathering place; additionally, current Postal employees have cleaned the facility along with enhancing the “we’re here to serve you” atmosphere. Community members have provided a coffee pot and coffee enlarging the concept of a “gathering place”.
6. Historical.
- a. This postal site has a 130 year historical presence (*the Post Office is a part of larger complex and serves as the hub to a small store and rental cabins*) and is a well known stop and the entrance to a 90 mile round trip through the beautiful and pastoral Quartz Valley leading to Ohio City, Pitkin and Tin Cup (*historic mining towns*) up to Taylor Park (*high country reservoir and popular summer recreational area*) with a return trip through the Taylor Canyon to Gunnison.
 - b. Current and on-going historical preservation of the mining communities will further enhance this scenic journey in Colorado, resulting in increased summer tourist traffic as well as the desirability for increased summer residency (*an increased need for postal services*).
7. The economics of providing postal service. The Parlin community recognizes the responsibility of financial efficiency; the follow suggestions are provided:
- a. The existing services seem pretty “bare bone”; it is a fact that postal service needs to be provided; the geographic and terrain issues limit options while creating a higher cost to providing basic postal services.
 - b. Closure of sub-stations in a metro area such as Denver would create greater and more substantial cost savings than the closure of many small remote post offices such as Parlin, where delivery has and will continue to have a cost. While any closure creates inconvenience for the served clientele, there are exiting options to the provision of service in a metro area which do not exit in a rural-remote community.
 - c. With many residents spending winters in warmer clients, additional needs for forwarding mail, holding mail and related services are benefited through the personal and professional services now provided.
 - d. A statement acknowledged at the public meeting by the postal representatives is the fact that small post offices nationwide account for less than 0.07 % of the postal budget, thus validating that small post office closure has little financial impact while resulting in major disruption of service to these small communities.

- e. I believe I am representative of the community (*comments shared by community members at the community meeting*) in suggesting that limiting service to Monday through Friday, and/or a shorter postal day (as is the case in the near by Powderhorn community) would be more acceptable alternatives than the permanent closure of this centrally and conveniently located Parlin Post Office.

In summary, while the community recognizes the reality of financial responsibility, we also recognize the reality of the continuance of mail delivery. As outlined above, cost of minimal service is a greater challenge with fewer alternative options for cost reduction in rural and remote areas like Parlin. I personally and the Parlin Post Office community seek the United States Postal Office consideration of the information provided in this and the many letters being forwarded by community members. Also attached is a petition with 40 names (*limited due to time sensitivity and summer residents still needing to return*), requesting the retention of regular postal service to rural areas such as the Parlin Post Office as outlined in the Postal Reorganization Act of 1970.

We, the community of Parlin and the Quartz Creek Valley further seek the support of our congressional representatives, Colorado and Federal, to assure continuance of the Parlin Post Office as a basic service to our community, as well as seeking such support for the on-going enhancement of the viability of this Colorado tourist asset.

Respectfully,

Leon K. Oltmann
Resident of the Parlin Post Office service community
and, President of Quartz Valley Improvement Association

Leon K. Oltmann

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April 22, 2011

Honorable Scott R. Tipton
U.S. House of Representatives
3rd Congressional District of Colorado
225 North 5th St., Suite 702
Grand Junction, CO 81501

Representative Tipton:

The U.S Postal Service has informed your constituents living/working and served by the Parlin Post Office, that the Parlin Post Office will be closed. The public meeting called by the Denver office provided that the negative economics of the Parlin Post Office is the primary reason for closure. Your review of the enclosed materials and attention to this concern is requested.

As you know, current law prohibits the Postal Service from closing or consolidating a Post Office solely because the individual Post Office may have expenses that exceed revenue. Congress created this safeguard against terminating a Post Office for two reasons:

1. The law protects small and rural communities, postal dependent areas, from wholesale Post Office closures that will have a dramatic adverse impact on the communities.
2. Post Offices are part of a universal communications network. Each unit cannot be evaluated independently, since revenue for a mail piece may be earned in one community and the value added in delivery is accrued in another.

In order to ensure nondiscriminatory mail service throughout the nation, Congress obligates the Postal Service to provide a maximum degree of effective and regular mail service to rural areas, communities and small towns where Post Offices are not self-sustaining. The Postal Regulatory Commission reporting demonstrates that all small and rural Post Offices amount to less than 0.7% of the Postal Services budget. The community served by the Parlin and Pitkin (whose service is funneled through Parlin) Post Offices, believes that closure of the Parlin Post Office will reduce mail service, and result in higher cost of time and finances for small area businesses.

The attached letter to the U.S. Postal District Consumer Affairs Manager plus the petition provides an outline of concerns and demonstration of community awareness. Additionally, regarding your interest in the economic health of Colorado, closure of this popular historic scenic route with it's increasing tourist interest, will be negatively impact by such Parlin Post Office closure. This is a major reality for today and the future in this tourist focused state.

Representative of the Postal Service, at the public meeting, further indicated State Congressional Representatives could reverse this intended closure; I, personally and as the President of the Quartz Valley Improvement Association (*the community served by the Parlin Post Office*), appeal on behalf of your constituents in Parlin for your aggressive involvement to prevent closure of the Parlin Post Office

Respectfully,

Leon K. Oltmann

April 21, 2011

RE: Closure of Parlin Colorado Post Office

Dear Sir,

This letter was probably delivered directly to your office. In rural America getting mail isn't quite so easy. These postal customers must leave home, walking or driving to a mailbox on the main road, a neighborhood box unit, or their nearest post office.

Recently the postal service has proposed closing the post office in Parlin, Colorado, sighting low mail volume and low projected growth as their reasons. This office serves around 300 souls; spread over 30 miles of rural roads, as well as the community of Parlin and the town of Ohio City. It is a transfer point for mail going up to the town of Pitkin.

Parlin is located at the intersection of Highway 50 and County road 76, opening into the Quartz Creek Valley. The Post Office has served the area since 1880.

Other offices in the area are not under the same scrutiny, even though they serve less people, have less desirable locations, and suffer from the same low volume and growth potential.

What they do have, are permanent postmasters. Due to a 2 year job freeze, Parlin is run by a clerk / officer in charge out of Gunnison's post office. I believe this is the real reason this office is up for closure. The USPS is desperate to eliminate career jobs with benefits, by not filling jobs and only hiring part time temporary help at lower wages and no benefits.

It is my understanding that a new contract made with mail clerks will allow them to run small offices. This would legitimize the current situation in Parlin without creating a new postmaster.

Without an office in Parlin customers will be driving up to 50 miles to sign for mail or retrieve a package. Mail carriers can only deviate ½ mile off route, yet the USPS says delivery will be unaffected. They also recommended using the internet for stamps and service. This is not a valid alternative, as the Valley only has very slow dial up internet, unreliable much of the time.

The cost of all the rural offices in the nation is ^{67%} 67% of the USPS's budget. At Parlin we're talking about 1 job and \$400 per month rent with utilities.

The elimination of service to rural areas is not a viable solution to the Postal Services budget problems.

Please look into this situation.

Thank you,

Judith Ebaugh
Po Box 95
Pitkin, CO 81241

Dear USPS,

We were told, at the April 13th meeting with your representatives, that the criteria they were using to close the Parlin Post Office, was mail volume and the projected growth of Parlin.

Volume is down everywhere due to internet usage and economic conditions, Parlin is no exception there.

As for projected growth in Parlin, it is a small cluster of homes, tourist cabins, and the store/ post office, surrounded by ranch land. The customers for the office come from;

1) County roads off of highway 50, served by either post office boxes or a contract driver from Gunnison, and

2) county road 76, 15 miles – county road 771, 20 miles, and the entire town of Ohio City, served by route originating in Parlin, which also brings up all the mail for the Pitkin Post Office. Did you also consider the potential growth for any of these areas?

Why Parlin, when there are smaller post offices in the area with out any route activity, without a 140 year history as a post office and transfer station, without a better location on the highway, and the gateway to a populated valley. Why not Sargents, Powderhorn, Cimmaron, or Pitkin?

Is it really because we have no permanent Postmaster, the job freeze? The OIC / Clerk we've had for almost 2 years is doing an excellent job and it's my understanding the new clerk's contract provides for running small offices.

Please keep a human face on mail service and provide an accessible office. Customers having to drive 22, 40, and up to 52 miles round trip to pick up a certified letter or a package too large for the parcel locker. It is an inconvenience, to say the least. Internet service is not a viable alternative, ^{why?} this valley. ,0720

Rural customers deserve service especially when 07% of your budget is all that is spent on all the rural offices in the nation.

Please reconsider, and keep this vital resource open.

Thank you,